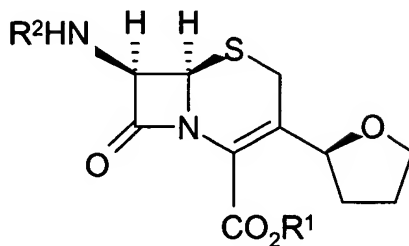
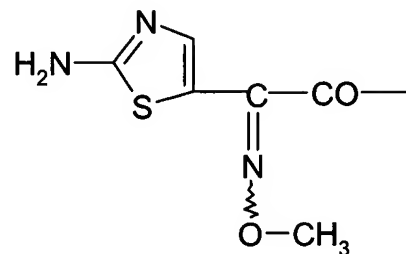


IN THE CLAIMS

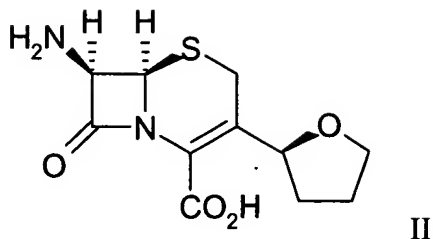
1. (Previously Presented): 1. (Currently Amended): A process for preparing a 3-cyclic-ether substituted cephalosporin of the formula I:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein the group CO_2R^1 is a carboxylic acid or a carboxylate salt; and R^2 has the formula



comprising reacting a compound of formula II



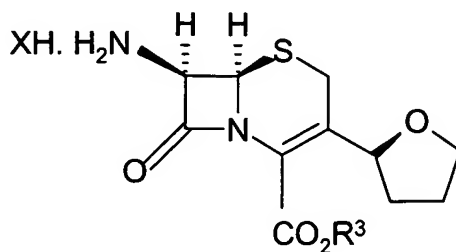
with a compound of the formula III



wherein R^2 is as defined above; and

L is di-(C_{1-6} alkyl)phosphorothioate; in the presence of a solvent and a base.

2. (Original): The process according to claim 1 further comprising the step of preparing said compound of formula II by reacting a compound of formula IV:



wherein R^3 is para-nitrobenzyl or allyl; and X is halo;

with a suitable deprotecting agent; in the presence of a solvent.

3-6. (Cancelled):

7. (Previously Presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein L of said compound of the formula III is diethylphosphorothioate.

8. (Cancelled).

9. (Previously Presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein said solvent is acetone.

10.-12. (Cancelled).

13. (Previously Presented): A process according to claim 1 wherein said base is sodium hydroxide.

14.-15. (Cancelled).

16. (Previously Presented): A process according to claim 2, wherein X is chloro.

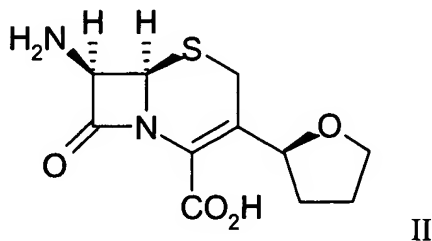
17. (Original): A process according to claim 2, wherein said R³ is para-nitrobenzyl and said suitable deprotecting agent is sodium dithionite or a catalytic hydrogenating agent.

18. (Original): A process according to claim 2, wherein said R³ is allyl and said suitable deprotecting agent is tetrakis triphenylphosphine palladium (0).

19. (Original): A process according to claim 17, wherein said solvent is acetone, water, tetrahydrofuran or mixtures thereof.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Original): A compound of formula II:



22. (Original): The compound according to claim 21 wherein said compound of the formula II has an enantiomeric or diastereomeric purity of 96% to 100%.

23. – 24. (Cancelled).

25. (Previously Presented): A process according to Claim 2 wherein R³ is para-nitrobenzyl.